

Big Creek Station Attendant Volunteer Position Outreach

Summer 2014

Area Description:

Big Creek Forest Service Work Station is located on the *Krassel Ranger District* of the *Payette National Forest*. It sits on the western border of the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness. At 2.3 million acres the contiguous Wilderness is the largest in the lower 48 states. Big Creek Station is 80 miles by rough dirt road east of *McCall, Idaho*, the closest town with services and headquarters for the Payette National Forest. The road is generally open from late June to late October depending on snowpack. Otherwise, access to Big Creek is by foot or air. The station sits adjacent to a 4,000' long grass airstrip which is popular for recreational pilots during the summer months. Along the road from McCall to Big Creek there is a small "town" of about 50 people and 1 bar, 1 general store, 1 café and a pay phone. Down the road from the station about a mile is Edwardsburg; a small community of summer homes.



The station sits in a valley at the headwaters of the Big Creek drainage at around 5,300' in elevation. The surrounding mountains have peaks around 9,000' high with several mountain lakes. There are 5 trailheads close by that access the Wilderness area. Currently, the station is used by the Forest Service as a hub of operations for Forest Service crews working in the backcountry and as a public contact location for visitors on the Forest. During the summer months up to 10 employees and 20 horses and mules are based out of the station while other crews may pass through for one or two nights at a time. Activities in the area include hiking/backpacking, camping, fishing, hunting, mountain biking, backcountry flying, horseback riding, kayaking and ATV/Motorcycle riding.

The station was first established in 1924 as a Forest Service Ranger Station for the Big Creek Ranger District. Over the years log buildings were built including a barn, ranger house, woodshed/shower house, gas house, crew cabin and a warehouse with an office, two apartments, tool room, and visitor area. There is a 10 acre pasture and corral for holding Forest Service stock during the summer months.



There is no electricity, phone or internet service at the station. Communication is by the Forest Service backcountry radio net and by mail service with delivery twice a week. Lighting, refrigeration, water heating and cooking is done with propane appliances. Running water is piped from a spring to the buildings. Irrigation for the pasture is gravity fed from a nearby creek. Heating for the living quarters is accomplished with wood burning stoves. Grocery shopping is done by a contractor, "Arnold Aviation", and delivered to the station once a week by air.

Station Attendant Duties:

The main priority for the station attendant volunteer is to maintain a presence at the station full time as the other crews come and go on 5 day or 10 day work assignments in the field. This presence is to assure the pack animals are looked after and well taken care of; as well as monitoring public use, being available for public contacts and daily radio calls and updates. In addition, the station attendant will take daily radio check-ins from crews in the field.

While maintaining a presence at the station the attendant will perform routine maintenance on the facilities, grounds, 4 unit campground, pasture, fencing, irrigation, corral and stock. Weekly or bi-weekly road patrols to trailheads and dispersed camping areas along the backcountry road system will be performed to pick up trailhead registration cards, maintain information signboards, site cleanup, visitor contact and for shuttling crews. The volunteer will work 5 days a week for \$28 a day. Housing will be provided in a one bedroom apartment located in the main compound building.

**For More Information Contact:**

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